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IMAGES IN CARDIOLOGY

Free-Floating Thrombus in the Left Atrium

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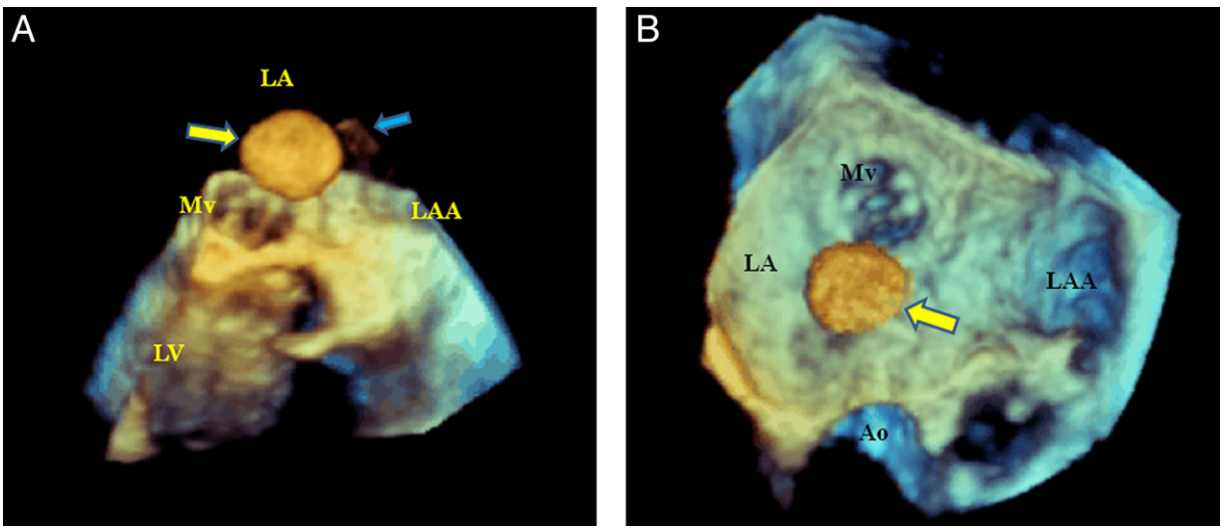

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A 72-year-old, asymptomatic patient with a history of permanent atrial fibrillation was admitted to our hospital for an echocardiographic follow-up 6 months after a mitral valve replacement. Two-dimensional transthoracic and transesophageal echocardiography revealed a freely moving mass in the left atrium. Three-dimensional transesophageal echocardiography (3D-TEE) demonstrated a ball-like thrombus **(yellow arrows)** bouncing around the atrium like a ball in a pinball machine. The mass was striking repeatedly against the mitral valve without obstructing it, due to its large size (**A and B**, Online Videos 1 and 2). 3D-TEE is a novel echocardiographic technique that helps to evaluate and differentiate a cardiac mass, providing additional information about its shape, size, mobility, attachment point, and spatial orientation (1,2). **Blue arrow** = spontaneous contrast into the left atrium. Ao = aorta; LA = left atrium; LAA = left atrial appendage; LV = left ventricle; Mv = prosthetic mitral valve.

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